

Olinger Research Reveals "Emotional ROI" Surges Summer Travel Spend by 54% Despite Economic Pressure

Olinger study reveals 54% jump in summer travel spending despite economic pressures as travelers prioritize emotional ROI over price considerations.

NEW ORLEANS, LA, UNITED STATES, September 15, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Olinger](#), a leading custom primary market research firm specializing in [travel and hospitality insights](#), today released findings from its comprehensive 2025 Summer Travel Study that challenge conventional insights about consumer travel behavior during economic uncertainty.

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Michael Vasquez, CEO, Olinger

The research, analyzing 392 U.S. travelers through Olinger's proprietary Live Well® Methodology, reveals a counterintuitive market dynamic: despite 51% of travelers reporting economic impact on their travel decisions, summer travelers increased annual spending by 54% while

simultaneously increasing trip frequency by 14%.

The Emotional ROI Revolution

The study identifies a fundamental shift from price-based decision making toward what Olinger terms "emotional return on investment." Travelers now prioritize meaningful experiences, connection, and personal renewal over conventional value metrics, creating new opportunities for brands that understand these psychological drivers.

"The travel industry is experiencing a permanent transformation in how consumers evaluate and prioritize their vacation investments," said Michael Vasquez, CEO at Olinger. "Companies that understand these emotional drivers are capturing market share from competitors still operating on traditional demographic or price-based strategies."

Live Well® Mind States Reveal Three Distinct Traveler Segments

Using Olinger's proprietary Live Well® framework, which measures Pride, Loyalty, Authenticity,

and Nostalgia (PLAN) dimensions, the research identifies three distinct traveler segments:

High Impact travelers represent affluent, decisive experience-seekers who drive premium seasonal travel through reward-focused approaches and demonstrate the highest emotional engagement across Pride and Loyalty dimensions.

Persuadable travelers embody budget-conscious yet brand-loyal consumers who value comfort and consistency, showing moderate emotional scores while strategically optimizing rewards programs.

Functional travelers approach travel practically, showing minimal Pride and Loyalty motivation while prioritizing reliability and straightforward value over emotional connections.

Each mind state exhibits measurably different booking behaviors, loyalty patterns, and spending preferences, requiring tailored marketing strategies and experience development.

High Net Worth Strategic Luxury Insights

The study reveals that only 30% of high household income travelers actively seek luxury amenities as essentials, with 58% viewing them as "nice to have." This "strategic luxury" mindset prioritizes emotional restoration over status signaling, with relaxation ranking as the top travel motivator.

Climate Consciousness Drives Decision Making

Weather and climate emerge as the second most important decision factor, with 89% rating it as highly important. This shift is fundamentally reshaping destination selection patterns as travelers actively seek climate-resilient options.

Research Methodology and Industry Impact

The 2025 Summer Travel Study represents Olinger's fourth annual comprehensive travel analysis, leveraging three decades of expertise in emotional and behavioral consumer research. The Live Well® Methodology provides predictive intelligence beyond traditional demographic segmentation by measuring the emotional dimensions that drive consumer behavior.

With 88% of travelers actively using rewards programs and families coordinating increasingly complex travel planning, the research provides strategic intelligence for travel brands adapting to permanently transformed consumer priorities.

About Olinger

Founded over three decades ago, Olinger is a leading custom primary market research firm specializing in emotional and behavioral insights for travel, hospitality, healthcare, wellness, and

financial services industries. The company's proprietary Live Well® Methodology helps brands understand consumer mind states that predict behavior more accurately than traditional demographic targeting.

Access the Complete Research

The full 2025 Summer Travel Study, including detailed mind state analysis, strategic implications, and actionable recommendations, is available for download at <https://www.olingermr.com/2025-summer-travel-study/>

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